



Rising together to make things happen.....

# North Hills Phoenix Association NEWS

September, 1995  
NHPA, P.O. Box 20784, Oakland CA 94620

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Phone: 510-273-9111

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DAY

This event is sponsored by the North Hills Phoenix Association. For more information, call the hotline at: (510)273-9111

*An educational as well as fun event for the whole family*

**WHERE:** NORTH OAKLAND SPORTS CENTER AT CALDECOTT AND TUNNEL ROAD (on frontage road adjacent to Hwy. 24)

**WHEN:** SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 17, 1 PM - 4 PM - POTLUCK FOLLOWING\*

A family day with plenty to do for adults and children. Meet your neighbors and with them learn how to prepare for emergencies that might strike the Oakland hills, most importantly *fire or earthquake*.

Sample activities include:

- CORE demonstration (Citizens of Oakland Respond to emergencies),
- See Engine 19 (our neighborhood fire engine),
- Speak with vendors\*\* and win prizes,
- Learn what a Neighborhood Command Post looks like,
- Meet with representatives from the American Red Cross and the Office of Emergency Services,
- Speak with representatives from Police and Fire Depts.

Our Assemblywoman, Barbara Lee will be present along with Councilwoman Sheila Jordan as well as representatives from the City of Oakland to answer your questions on the City's emergency preparedness.

*By Becoming proactive in fire and earthquake prevention and preparedness we demonstrate that the lessons of October 20, 1991 will not be forgotten.*

\*\* Vendors: American Red Cross, Alta Bates Hospital, California Disaster Preparedness & Supply Co., Earthquake Outlet, LN Curtis & Sons, Brush, Fire Hydrant Co., Earthquake Preparedness Supply, Earthquake Preparedness Association and others.

\*Potluck information: To coordinate food please contact Betty Soldz, 845-9579 or Marianne Perron, 652-2583. Beverages will be available. There are no tables so please bring a blanket or chairs to sit on.

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# Council Report - Status of a North Hills Fire Station

By  
P. Lamont Ewell

## Background

Following the October, 1991 Hill Fire, the City Council directed the Fire Department to develop, with the Berkeley Fire Department, a jointly funded and operated fire station to serve the residents of the North Hills area. The concept of a jointly operated fire station was one of many recommendations made to improve fire response and protection in the North Hills area. From the outset, however, the North Hills station was not planned to serve as a fully staffed or daily operated station. Rather it was intended to serve as a staging area for personnel and equipment during periods of high fire hazard weather.

Four potential sites on Grizzly Peak Boulevard, between Centennial Drive and Claremont Avenue were identified as being the most suitable locations for the station. Representatives met a number of times during a fifteen month period to plan the new station. A technical committee of architects, planners and engineers composed of representatives from the agencies also met to determine the feasibility of the various sites.

Enumerated below are some of the problems and difficulties that led to the abandonment of the joint fire station concept by both cities:

Two of the sites were too far from existing utility connections. The cost of running new utility lines for water and power would far outweigh the potential benefits of the station.

Extensive engineering work would be required to build the station on those sites being considered.

Negative environmental repercussions made the sites impractical for building.

Two additional sites were located either too far from Oakland or too far from Berkeley to be acceptable to either jurisdiction.

## Current Situation

Currently, fire protection for this area is provided by Station 19, located near College and Miles. The next closest fire station is Station 8 located at 51st and Telegraph Avenue. The response time for Station 19 into the North Hills area is much longer than the desired recommended time of five minutes. Should Station 19 be unavailable for a fire in this area, the response time for the next due fire engine could exceed 12 minutes. As recent history has taught us, rapid response into this area is essential if a disastrous fire is to be prevented.

(Continued on page 3)

The lack of a North Hills fire station remains a significant obstacle to shortened response time.

This report is excerpted from public records by the NHPA ~~News~~ as part of our continuing coverage of this important issue.  
Ed.

# Fire Station Update, Continued

## Next Steps

The Chief and the Staff of the Fire Department have pledged to seek neighborhood advice on constructing an appropriate facility in this area. Small group meetings among city officials, planners and residents will begin in September.

After neighborhood input is collected and incorporated in the plans, acceptance from the neighbors will be sought. The proposal will then go to Council.

It is important to realize that neighborhood concerns will be reflected in future proposals. Please contact your Council representative or OFD (238-3856) or the NHPA with your point of view!

## Proposal

The Fire Department is now proposing the the City build a fire station to serve the residents of the North Hills area which is operated solely by the Oakland Fire Department and serves primarily the residents of the North Hills area. A site has been identified at the intersection of Amato Avenue and Gravatt Drive which would accommodate the construction of this new fire station.

## Cost

Because of the essentially disaster prevention role for this station, the station would qualify for Measure I funding. Originally, \$1.5 million was set aside for the construction of the joint fire station. The City Architect has surveyed the site for feasibility of construction and estimates that a station capable of housing two pieces of fire apparatus could be constructed for that amount.

The land for this station has been offered to the City for \$ 150,000. This price is far below market value for comparable lots in this area.

## Operating Costs

Since this station will only be operating during periods of high fire danger weather (*Red Flag Warning*), operating costs are based on a limited number of days of station staffing and operations.

Department staff estimates that the station would be staffed approximately twenty days each year. Staffing would consist of a four person crew consisting of an officer, and engineer and two firefighters.

The daily cost for this crew based on overtime rates is \$3,027.96. Twenty days of operation would cost \$60,559.20. This amount represents a maximum operating cost for personnel staffing. Assuming that many of the days would be 12 hour periods coinciding with the high danger hours between 8:00 am and 8:00 pm, then operating costs would be far less than the maximum projected amount.

Other operating costs such as fuel, maintenance and repair would not significantly add to the personnel costs. These costs are reflected in the daily operations of the Department.

## Recommendation

Staff recommends that the City build a fire station to serve the residents of the North Hills area, which is operated solely by the Oakland Fire Department and serves primarily the residents of the North Hills area.